

In the name of Allah, the most Compassionate, the ever Merciful



IONA
REPENTANCE
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

IONA MASJID COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

January 2022 | Jumada Al-Awwal - Jumada Al-Akhirah 1443

Volume 16, No 1

Image: Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) first revelation was in the cave of Hira' on the Mount of Light (Jabal an-Nur)

- * Announcements..... 2
- * Synopsis: Are You Ready for the Inevitable?..... 3
- * Sisters: What is Islamic Social Justice..... 4
- * Kids Corner: Wisdom of Iyas Ibn Muawiyah..... 5
- * Prayer Times:8

From His Glorious Book

"In houses of worship which God has permitted to be raised where His Name is mentioned. There, He is glorified in the mornings and evenings."

[An-Nur, 24:36]

From the Tradition of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

"When you pass by the meadows of Paradise, graze as you like." I said, "O Messenger of Allah, what are the meadows of Paradise?" The Prophet said, "The mosques." I said, "O Messenger of Allah, what is its grazing?" The Prophet said, "To declare the glory of Allah, the praise of Allah, the greatness of Allah, and that there is no God but Allah."

[Tirmidhi]

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Umrah in February

Join Sh. Mustapha Elturk

Feb 12th to 21st

See Page 2

Join us **Live** for both Virtual Friday Sermons 12:10 & 1:30 PM





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12th to 21st

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January 2022

Jumada Al-Awwal - Jumada Al-Akhirah 1443

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Are You Ready for the Inevitable?

Just as we swiftly come into this world, suddenly, the inevitable reality, death comes upon us. If anything is certain in life, it is death. Death is an undeniable truth that no one can deny nor escape from. Every second of everyday a person dies somewhere in the world. It is inevitable and unavoidable. We will be returning to our Owner and Creator.

Death is a subject people often avoid to talk about, much less remember it. The Qur'an, in many places confirms, "Every soul will taste death." This repetition is to remind the believers of this reality allowing them to reflect on their lives and the life to come. Conscious believers who are firm on their belief in the hereafter will take heed of these reminders and prepare themselves for that moment of truth.

Every soul shall go through this phase and there is no way out. "Say (O Prophet), 'the death you are running away from will come to meet you and you will be returned to the One who knows the unseen as well as the seen and He will then inform you of what you used to do.'" (al-Jumu'ah, 62:8) More emphasis is made in the following ayah, "Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you are inside lofty towers." (al-Nisa', 4:78)

The angel of death or "Malak al-Mawt." is ever ready to claim our souls, "Say (O Prophet), 'The Angel of Death put in charge of you will reclaim you, and then you will be brought back to your Lord.'" (al-Sajdah, 32:11)

Some die suddenly while others undergo pain and suffering. According to prophetic traditions, sickness is a source of mercy and a chance for forgiveness. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) once said, "For every misfortune, illness, anxiety, grief or hurt that afflicts a believer – even the hurt caused by the pricking of a thorn – God wipes off his sins and his sins fall away from him as leaves fall from a tree." This is God's gift to the believer.

Unfortunately, many people are heedless of death. The attraction of this world keeps them busy making money, competing for fame and seeking earthly pleasures. This tragedy leaves the soul hopeless and helpless.

This weakness was profoundly expressed by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in a hadith

when he warned the Muslims of a time when Allah (SWT) would cast "wahn" in their hearts. When he was asked about the "wahn," the Prophet replied, "Love of the present world (dunya) and hatred of death." Unfortunately, most people are deceived by the present life as Allah (SWT) recounts, "But you prefer the life of this world. While the hereafter is better and everlasting." (al-'Ala, 87:16,17)

What is life? Philosophers and thinkers have always been grappling with this question. Rather than discussing their speculative thoughts, it is best to know what Allah (SWT) Himself says about life. "Know (O people) that the life of this world is (nothing but) play and amusement, an adornment and boasting among you, and an increase in wealth and children..." (al-Hadid, 57:20). This is generally, the reality of man's perception about this worldly life, whether that person is a Muslim, a follower of another faith tradition, an agnostic, or even an atheist. This life according to Allah, "Is like plants that grow after rain; (their growth) delights the tillers, but then you see them wither away, turn yellow and become stubble..."

Indeed, Allah spoke the truth. We are born into this world as babies wanting to only play and have fun; compete with our peers in our teenage years; reach the prime of youth, get a degree, obtain a career or establish a business and spend the rest of our lives making money and children until we become old, frail, sick and eventually die. What has one done for the next life, the real eternal abode, one might ask? The ayah continues, "There is terrible punishment in the next life as well as forgiveness and pleasure from God..." Allah concludes the ayah by explaining that, "The life of this world is only an illusory pleasure." (al-Hadid, 57:20).

Allah (SWT) gives people chance after chance. "If God were to take people to task for the evil they do, He would not leave one living creature on earth, but He defers them to an appointed time: when their time comes they cannot delay it for a moment nor can they advance it." (al-Nahl, 16:61). The term of one's life span is predetermined by Allah (SWT) before birth. Only He (SWT) knows when and where each person will expire.

Although, death is certain and inevitable,



"Every soul is certain to taste death. We test you all through the bad and the good (things of life) by way of a trial, and to Us you will all return."

(al-Anbiya', 21:35)



Continues on page 6



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What is Islamic Social Justice?

With the current political climate and countless social justice movements happening all around us, you may have pondered a bit about what our *deen* says about social justice.

The first thing that came to mind for me was this quote from the prophet Muhammad’s (ﷺ) farewell sermon, “*All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor does a black have any superiority over a white except by piety and good action.*”

Prophet Muhammad’s (ﷺ) words here indeed are speaking to the justice each and every person deserves, the inclusivity of Islam, the equality of all of mankind. He also infers that oppression would certainly not be permissible. So how does Islamic Law or Shari’ah work to promote and provide social justice?

As IONA's new Director of Publications, I had the privilege of attending a two-day lecture on this topic given by Ameer Mustapha Elturk to the students of MORE (Macomb Organization for Retiree Enrichment) at Macomb Community College’s University Center in November. The following is a very brief summary of what I learned at the lecture titled “The Islamic Perspective On Social Justice”.

As a society, Islam has three areas of social order, each with their own goal towards providing social justice:

- **Social:** The goal of Islamic society is for there to be no discrimination. No one is to be discriminated against on the basis of race, color or gender. As The Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned in his farewell sermon, one’s piety and good deeds is the only thing that can set us apart, but it is important for us to remember that only Allah (ﷻ) is the judge to determine this distinction among humankind.
- **Political:** The goal of the Islamic political system is for there to be no oppression. No one should be oppressed or be oppressing others. As Muslims we have the duties of helping those being oppressed and also speaking out against anyone oppressing others.
- **Economic:** The goal of the Islamic economic system is for there to be no exploitation. Most of us have learned that interest and usury (*riba*) exploit the borrower and only seek to benefit the lender. Additionally, under the Islamic economic system, the husband is responsible for providing financially for his wife and children, and *zakah* is a means to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor.

A key take away for me from this lecture was learning the true purpose of *zakah* as well as how we are merely the trustees of Allah’s (ﷻ) bounty. Allah (ﷻ) gives us each our own provisions and bounty to work for (*rizq*) and asks of us to give to those who have lesser provisions from Him. What a test! Knowing that everything is Allah’s (ﷻ) and that we do not actually own any of it, what will we do with the bounty from Allah (ﷻ) that He has entrusted us with?

And if you are one with a smaller provision, then those who have more are obligated to share their wealth with you! Allah (ﷻ) is indeed the best of justices (judges) and The Most Just.

It is so easy to get wrapped up in the things of this life and slip into a sense of entitlement, believing that we have what we have because we earned it with our own doing or because we put forth the extra work of getting a college degree or working extra hard to earn our position in our job. But we must remember that Allah (ﷻ) made it possible for some of us to get that college degree and gave some of us the physical and mental capabilities that make it possible for us to work extra hard at our jobs. Allah (ﷻ) may have given some the intellectual capabilities but limited their wealth as a test for them and for us. Suppose a family may have a sick child that requires extra expensive medical care or countless other possibilities of trials that one or a family may be facing.

Since Allah (ﷻ) chooses to give some more and some less in this life, those of us who are given more must look after our brothers and sisters whose provisions are less than ours. The trials of our brothers and sisters are our trials as well. Since Allah (ﷻ) is the grantor of ALL THINGS, then we certainly should not think of our ourselves as better or above others because we were able to work hard and obtain more, but rather feel grateful that Allah (ﷻ) gave us the ability, the opportunity and the means. We need to strive to remain in a state of humility and gratitude and help those who Allah (ﷻ) says are entitled to depend on our sharing. What better way to show our gratitude to Allah (ﷻ) than to share His bounty with those who will benefit from it.

As Ameer Mustapha Elturk pointed out in his lecture, we want to work towards closing the gap between those who have an abundance and those who barely have anything at all. Giving *zakah* (and also asking for *zakah* if you are in need) is the perfect way for us to share in the bounties from Allah (ﷻ).

“To Him belong the keys [of the treasuries] of the heavens and the earth. He gives abundant or limited provisions to whoever He wills. Indeed, He has [perfect] knowledge of all things.”
(al-Shura, 42:12)

Stephanie Turner



Wisdom of Iyas Ibn Muawiyah

A man came to Iyas Ibn Mu'awiyah, a Muslim judge famous for his wisdom, and the following conversation took place between them:

Man: What is the Islamic ruling regarding wine?

Judge: It is Haram (Forbidden).

Man: How about water?

Judge: It is Halal (Permissible).

Man: How about dates and grapes?

Judge: They are Halal.

Man: Why is it that all these ingredients are Halal, and yet when you combine them, they become Haram?

The judge looked at the man and said: If I hit you with this handful of dirt, do you think it would hurt you?

Man: It would not.

Judge: How about if I hit you with this handful of straw?

Man: It would not hurt me.

Judge: How about a handful of water?

Man: It surely would not hurt me.

Judge: How about if I mix them, and let them dry to become a brick, and then hit you with it, would it hurt you?

Man: It would hurt me and might even kill me!

Judge: The same reasoning applies to what you asked me!!

Iyas Ibn Muawiyah Al-Muzani was a tabi'i Qadi (judge) in the 2nd century AH who lived in Basra (modern day Iraq). He was renowned for possessing immense cleverness which became a favourite topic in Arabic folklore.

Courtesy of: <https://islamcan.com/islamic-stories/wisdom-of-iyas-ibn-muawiyah.shtml>



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Overview of the life of the Prophet Muhammad SAW

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yet people tend to live as if they are going to live forever. Reality is, death will catch up with everyone and it knows no age. Often times it comes suddenly. Many die in the prime of their youth. It happens that sometimes the father has to bury his son. I had to burry my son who died at the young age of 33.

The mystery of life and death is not without purpose. The life of this world is a test from God. Humans are tested on the basis of the heavenly covenant Allah (SWT) took from them in the world of spirits. "Blessed is He in Whose hand is the dominion (of the universe), and He has power over all things. The One who created Death and Life that He may test you (to see) which of you is best in deeds: and He is the Almighty, the Forgiving." (al-Mulk, 67:1,2)

People are constantly put to all types of tests. "Every soul is certain to taste death. We test you all through the bad and the good (things of life) by way of a trial, and to Us you will all return." (al-Anbiya', 21:35) Believers are urged to be patient while facing trials and tribulations. "O you who believe! Seek help through patience and prayer, for God is with the patient." (al-Baqarah, 2:153)

Believers throughout their entire lives anticipate hardships and difficulties. They are aware of Allah's promise, "We shall certainly test you with fear, hunger, loss of property, lives, and crops. But, give good news to those who are patient. Those who, when inflicted with a calamity say, 'We belong to God and to Him we will return.' Those are the people who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord; they are the ones who are guided." (al-Baqarah: 156,157) Believers do not complain but resign themselves to God's will. They remain patient in the face of adversity knowing that they belong to God and to Him they will return. Believers are not afraid of death.

What is the reality of death? The word 'taste' in the ayah, "Every soul shall taste death" is similar to its usage when used with food for example. Good and wholesome food will taste good and sweet while bad, sour and bitter food will always taste bad and bitter. Similarly, a good and righteous soul will taste the sweetness of death while a wicked and rebellious soul will taste the bitterness of death.

When death occurs, the spirit (ruh) leaves the body. We learn through prophetic traditions that a good soul comes out of the body with ease, while an evil soul, which resists leaving the body is taken out harshly by the angel of death. The two types of souls are accordingly honored and dishonored in their respective journeys to the heavenly dimensions and back to the grave when they are questioned. The souls will return to the grave for the final exam. A good soul will have no problem answering simple questions such as who is your Lord? Who is your Prophet? And, what is your Book? As simple as they may sound, a wicked soul that lived in rebellion against Allah (SWT) will have a terrible time in the grave and will not be able to

answer the posed questions. May Allah (SWT) bestow His Mercy upon all of us, ameen.

We must recognize that people take nothing with them to their graves. We learn through a prophetic saying, "When a man dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things, perpetual charity (Sadaqah Jariyah); knowledge which is beneficial; or a righteous descendant who prays for him (the deceased)."

Such admonitions remind us that we should hasten in performing good deeds lest our time expire and our book of deeds be closed forever. The Prophet (SAW) in a hadith said, "An intelligent wise person is one who controls his desires (nafs) and works for that which come after death."

The following admonition speaks volumes, "O you who believe! Be mindful of God, and let every soul look to what it sends for tomorrow (Day of Judgment) and fear God, for God is well aware of everything you do." (al-Hasr, 59:18)

Indeed, "Every soul shall taste death and you will be paid in full (but) only on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever is kept away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise will have triumphed. The present world is only an illusory pleasure." (Aal Imran, 3:185)

Death is an inescapable reality that everyone must acknowledge. What are we to do about it? How are we going to prepare for it? We should be ready for what is to come after death i.e. the afterlife, resurrection, and Judgment Day.

The Messenger of Allah (SAW) in his first public speech stressed, "By Allah! You will die just as you sleep, and you will be resurrected just as you wake up from sleep. You will be recompensed on account of what you do, earning good for good and evil for evil. Verily, it is either Paradise for eternity or the Fire for eternity."

May Allah (SWT) make our good deeds heavy on the Day of Judgment and bestow His Grace and Mercy on all of us, ameen.

"Every soul is certain to taste death"

Are you prepared for it ?



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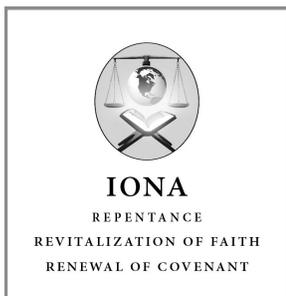
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IONA Masjid - Salah and Iqama Timings for January 2022

DATE	Fajr	Iqama	Sunrise	Zuhr	Iqama	Asr (S)*	Asr (H)*	Iqama	Maghrib	Azan	Isha	Iqama
Sat 1	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:41	1:00	2:52	3:28	3:45	5:13	5:18	6:42	7:45
Sun 2	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:41	2:00	2:52	3:29	3:45	5:14	5:19	6:43	7:45
Mon 3	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:42	1:00	2:53	3:30	3:45	5:15	5:20	6:44	7:45
Tue 4	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:42	1:00	2:54	3:31	3:45	5:16	5:21	6:44	7:45
Wed 5	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:42	1:00	2:55	3:32	3:45	5:17	5:22	6:45	7:45
Thu 6	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:43	1:00	2:56	3:32	3:45	5:18	5:23	6:46	7:45
Fri 7	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:43	1:00	2:57	3:33	3:45	5:19	5:24	6:47	7:45
Sat 8	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:44	1:00	2:58	3:34	3:45	5:20	5:25	6:47	7:45
Sun 9	6:26	6:45	8:01	12:44	2:00	2:59	3:36	3:45	5:21	5:26	6:48	7:45
Mon 10	6:26	6:45	8:01	12:45	1:00	3:00	3:37	4:00	5:22	5:27	6:49	7:45
Tue 11	6:25	6:45	8:01	12:45	1:00	3:01	3:38	4:00	5:23	5:28	6:50	7:45
Wed 12	6:25	6:45	8:00	12:45	1:00	3:02	3:39	4:00	5:24	5:29	6:51	7:45
Thu 13	6:25	6:45	8:00	12:46	1:00	3:03	3:40	4:00	5:26	5:31	6:52	7:45
Fri 14	6:25	6:45	8:00	12:46	1:00	3:04	3:41	4:00	5:27	5:32	6:53	7:45
Sat 15	6:24	6:45	7:59	12:46	1:00	3:05	3:42	4:00	5:28	5:33	6:54	7:45
Sun 16	6:24	6:45	7:59	12:47	2:00	3:06	3:43	4:00	5:29	5:34	6:55	7:45
Mon 17	6:23	6:45	7:58	12:47	1:00	3:07	3:44	4:00	5:30	5:35	6:56	7:45
Tue 18	6:23	6:45	7:58	12:48	1:00	3:08	3:46	4:00	5:32	5:37	6:57	7:45
Wed 19	6:22	6:45	7:57	12:48	1:00	3:09	3:47	4:00	5:33	5:38	6:58	7:45
Thu 20	6:22	6:45	7:56	12:48	1:00	3:10	3:48	4:00	5:34	5:39	6:59	7:45
Fri 21	6:21	6:45	7:56	12:48	1:00	3:11	3:49	4:00	5:35	5:40	7:00	7:45
Sat 22	6:21	6:45	7:55	12:49	1:00	3:12	3:51	4:00	5:37	5:42	7:01	7:45
Sun 23	6:20	6:45	7:54	12:49	2:00	3:13	3:52	4:00	5:38	5:43	7:02	7:45
Mon 24	6:19	6:45	7:54	12:49	1:00	3:14	3:53	4:15	5:39	5:44	7:03	7:45
Tue 25	6:19	6:45	7:53	12:49	1:00	3:15	3:54	4:15	5:40	5:45	7:04	7:45
Wed 26	6:18	6:45	7:52	12:50	1:00	3:16	3:56	4:15	5:42	5:47	7:05	7:45
Thu 27	6:17	6:45	7:51	12:50	1:00	3:17	3:57	4:15	5:43	5:48	7:06	7:45
Fri 28	6:16	6:45	7:50	12:50	1:00	3:19	3:58	4:15	5:44	5:49	7:07	7:45
Sat 29	6:15	6:45	7:49	12:50	1:00	3:20	3:59	4:15	5:46	5:51	7:09	7:45
Sun 30	6:15	6:45	7:48	12:50	2:00	3:21	4:01	4:15	5:47	5:52	7:10	7:45
Mon 31	6:14	6:45	7:47	12:51	1:00	3:22	4:02	4:15	5:48	5:53	7:11	7:45
Tue 1	6:13	6:45	7:46	12:51	1:00	3:23	4:03	4:15	5:50	5:55	7:12	7:45

* S = Shafi'i, H = Hanafi

Join us LIVE on YouTube for Friday Sermons at 12:10 PM and 1:30 PM



IONA's objective is to help the Muslims of North America understand and fulfill their divinely ordained obligations, in order to please Allah (SWT) and thereby achieve success and salvation in the Hereafter. The aim is to seek the forgiveness and mercy of Allah (SWT) in the hereafter.

On the basis of the best scholarly understandings of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* IONA has recognized that our divinely ordained obligations are as follows:

- (1) the cultivation of a strong and authentic faith;
- (2) the loving and sincere obedience to the will of Allah (SWT);
- (3) calling all of humankind towards Islam in the most beautiful and convincing way; and,
- (4) engaging in the struggle to establish social, political, and economic justice.